



Nuclear Watch Tower

“there must be some kind of way out of here . . .”

www.nonukesyall.org

NUCLEAR WATCH SOUTH news | FALL 2022

Nuclear Watch South Votes “NO CONFIDENCE” in Plant Vogtle

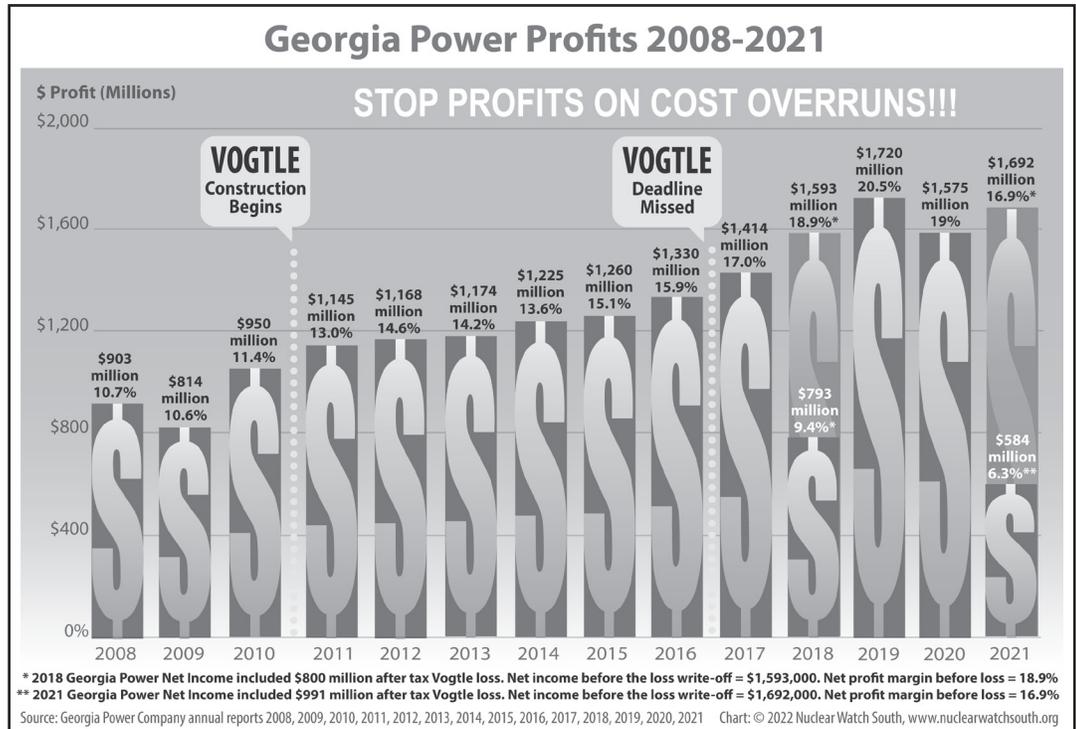
by Glenn Carroll

NUCLEAR WATCH SOUTH remains unequivocally opposed to the Vogtle project and greets the recent announcement that the NRC has completed its safety review, granting permission to Southern Nuclear to load nuclear fuel in Vogtle 3, with grave trepidation.

Delays, errors and cost overruns have plagued this failed project from the start of construction. Loading nuclear fuel into this untested reactor design is a risky step that may well proceed similarly, with yet more ominous ramifications upon actual start up. All other such projects have been abandoned — Nuclear Watch South gives a vote of NO CONFIDENCE to the Westinghouse AP1000 or its construction.

Nuclear Watch South has been showing, since 2015, using Georgia Power’s figures published in its annual reports, that the power output from this colossal, expensive boondoggle is not needed. Vogtle 3 & 4, if ever brought on line, will add a mere 6-7% to Georgia Power’s bloated power portfolio which already is chronically underutilized by an average of 30% per year. The only clear “benefit” to constructing Plant Vogtle has been to pump up Georgia Power’s profits and in that regard it has been a whopping success as Georgia Power has made more than \$12 billion in profit since Vogtle construction began. see: <https://www.nonukesyall.org/Vogtle.html>

The recent revelation of tens of thousands of incomplete inspection records going back how far (no one knows ... or at least will say) in the 11th hour leading up to this milestone beggars belief that all aspects of this dangerous reactor have



been inspected, tested, and analyzed by the construction contractors, and properly vetted by regulators. It is impossible to overstate how much is at stake when it comes to nuclear safety and if anyone thinks that Chernobyl and Fukushima can’t happen here they could be tragically wrong.

Despite Georgia Power’s confident announcements, the road to reactor start-up is still long, steep and rigorous. Independent construction monitors have testified that there remains quite a lot of construction that is not on the path to fuel load that must be completed before achieving commercial operation. If and when the nuclear fuel is tested for nuclear criticality, the vast nuclear factory will be irrevocably contaminated, becoming ultimately radioactive waste.

Given that power from this expensive white elephant is not needed, Georgians are being tricked into a \$30 billion+ obligation that is

nothing more than a gratuitous radioactive waste factory putting pressure on an already over-burdened Savannah River and threatening the Georgia countryside and all of its living creatures with the threat of catastrophic radioactive contamination.

The brief history of nuclear energy includes numerous examples of abandoned unfinished reactors. Georgia Power can even now get on the right side of history by abandoning Plant Vogtle and beginning today to deploy solar panels and batteries on the homes and businesses that will use the power. The great state of Georgia deserves a shot at being distinguished for something better than being the last victims of corporate nuclear greed.

Glenn Carroll, coordinator of Nuclear Watch South, conducts legal interventions before the PSC and NRC

FUKUSHIMA IN THE FOOTHILLS?

Spotlight on Duke Energy's Dangerous Oconee Nuclear Complex



Linda Pentz and Paul Gunter of Beyond Nuclear joined Sierra Club's Frank and Jane Powell (and Comet) and Nuclear Watch South's Joanne Sweeney, Glenn Carroll and Stephen Wing to protest the unresolved flood risk at Duke Energy's Oconee Nuclear Station. Photo ©2022 Jeff Mitman

NUCLEAR WATCH SOUTH teamed up with Beyond Nuclear and Sierra Club to spotlight the flooding risk to Duke Energy's three reactors at Oconee Nuclear Station with two events in observance of the 11th anniversary of Fukushima.

The groups sponsored a Japanese supper March 11 in White County, Georgia, screening *Alone in the Zone* film about cattle farmers who remained behind when Fukushima was evacuated. March 12, the action moved to South Carolina for a presentation featuring Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) whistleblower Jeff Mitman with Paul and Linda Gunter of Beyond Nuclear at Clemson University. Both events were well attended and the presentation at Clemson is preserved on www.nonukesyall.org/Oconee.html.

The groups upped the ante by taking out several full-page ads in the Oconee emergency planning zone. Clemson University was preparing its special April Fools issue so we contributed an ad in tabloid magazine-style with Godzilla looming over the reactor complex and blaring headlines about the outrageous situation at Oconee. It also featured the 50-mile emergency planning zone map you see here, and the following text:

ON MARCH 11, 2011, the Great Tōhoku Earthquake and Tsunami devastated northern Japan. Three nuclear reactors in Fukushima Prefecture melted down and exploded on March 12, March 14 and March 15, 2011, because flooding destroyed the power supply necessary to cool the reactors. More than 30,000 people in a 12-kilometer radioactively contaminated zone are still displaced 11 years later. Of 54 reactors in Japan at the time of the earthquake, only nine have been restarted. As a result of the radiological disaster, Japan has committed to decommission a total of 21 reactors.

Duke Energy's Oconee nuclear complex is almost 50 years old, as is the upstream Jocassee Dam. The risk of Jocassee Dam failure and flooding of Oconee's safety equipment is unacceptably high. Dam failure could deliver a wall of water 19 feet high that would overtake the reactor complex and disable the Safe Shutdown Facility. Reactor meltdowns and radiation releases similar to what happened in Japan are predictable. The impact on Clemson University, 10 miles downstream, would be catastrophic.



DUKE ENERGY OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION
50-MILE EMERGENCY PLANNING ZONE
3 STATES 27 COUNTIES 1,435,128 PEOPLE

This dire scenario should be unimaginable. In actuality, the abysmal flood risk is known to both regulators and Duke Energy. Earlier this year, Duke's 20-year license extension application with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission was put on hold until an environmental impact statement of the flooding risk is completed. Only Godzilla knows when that will be as no deadline has yet been established. The three aging reactors at Oconee threaten not only people and property but also a region beloved for beautiful mountains and rivers, forests, streams, lakes and wildlife. The risk is significant and the stakes are high.

Nuclear Watch South in New Mexico

by Joanne Sweeney

JULY 16TH 2022 WAS the 77th anniversary of the Trinity nuclear bomb test at the Alamogordo Bombing and Gunnery Range in Jornada del Muerto valley of New Mexico. The Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium (TBDC) held a Town Hall Meeting and Candlelight Vigil in honor of the over 800 known people who lost their lives from Radiation Exposure down wind of the Trinity bomb test. I was privileged to attend the events while in New Mexico visiting family.

Listening to the stories of Mexican American, Anglo ranch families, and Diné miner, Leslie Begay, the health and environmental suffering from radioactive exposure was visceral. The evening candlelight commemoration paid tribute not only to the over 800 people who had passed, but also to stillborn children and the infant mortality resulting from The Bomb.

In 2018, Nuclear Watch South coordinator and board members lobbied in Washington with Tina Cordova for the TBDC efforts to pass bills in Congress to expand the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to include civilian downwinders.

From Tularosa and Alamogordo, I traveled to Albuquerque and met with Diné activist Leona Morgan. Leona helped me make contacts in New Mexico to see firsthand the impact of the nuclear industry on Indigenous communities. Leona works on a campaign to stop uranium mining at the Grand Canyon and to address threats of nuclear colonialism: past and ongoing uranium mining and milling, transport of radioactive materials, cleanup of abandoned uranium mines (AUMs), and a proposed radioactive waste dump. The entire nuclear fuel chain from uranium extraction to nuclear weapons, energy development, and waste contaminate the sacred water, land and life.

Leona put me in contact with Petuuche Gilbert, Acoma Eagle Clan elder engaged in environmentalism locally, nationally and internationally. Petuuche generously spent his birthday riding the roads with me through the Acoma and Laguna Pueblo communities to uranium tailings piles, superfund sites and inactive but not cleaned up uranium mine and milling sites. Concerned about radioactive plumes of contamination from these unlined waste sites getting into the aquifer, he

works in collaboration with the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment, and other organizations for better monitoring and clean up. This year the local health impacts of uranium mining on residents were spotlighted in news stories by Pro Publica and PBS. *See the accompanying sidebar for these and other informative links.* Petuuche and Leona also collaborate with the Congolese Civil Society of South Africa to acknowledge and address the contamination of the Shinkolobwe uranium mine.

Don Hancock of the Southwest Research and Information Center in Albuquerque met with me and explained that the environmental justice victories of our work are temporary, but our losses can be permanent. Rather than give up, it is important that we acknowledge our victories: there haven't

been new uranium mines; proposals to store commercial nuclear spent fuel on the Mescalero Apache reservation were stopped in the 1990s. The permanent deep geologic high-level radioactive waste disposal site at Yucca Mountain has been stopped, as was the Southern Company-led Private Fuel Storage on the Skull Valley Goshute Band's reservation in Utah.

But now there is the Holtec Consolidated Interim Storage proposal on the border of Texas and New Mexico to stop. Don says that it's unfortunate to have to fight the same thing again, but when you have stopped it in the past, there is hope you will stop it again. There is historic and ongoing work to identify contaminated water and get clean water to communities, and monitor health and provide services to affected communities. Don said, "Petuuche's people have survived attempts of genocide for generations, and they inspire us carry on."

These strong, dedicated folks who shared their stories and work inspire us to understand the Cradle-to-Grave legacy of the Atomic Age so we can continue to work in solidarity for an end to nuclear weapons and nuclear energy production, and hold the government and the nuclear industry accountable for cleanup and



Acoma Pueblo elder and environmental activist, Petuuche Gilbert stands by the contaminated Homestake Uranium tailings site.

Photo ©2022 Joanne Sweeney

radiation exposure compensation for all downwinders.

Joanne Sweeney, formerly Joanne Steele, is Nuclear Watch South board president

RESOURCE LINKS

Tularosa Basin Downwinders

<https://www.trinitydownwinders.com>

HAUL NO #endnuclearcolonialism

www.haulno.com

PRO PUBLICA | A Uranium Ghost Town

in the Making: Maggie and John

<https://youtu.be/k56cMZmSIPg>

PBS | Residents in the Southwest struggle with the health effects of nuclear ore extraction

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/residents-in-the-southwest-struggle-with-the-health-effects-of-nuclear-ore-extraction>

Shinkolobwe: Missing link of the atomic bomb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhcTNZpExnc>

SW Research and Information Center

www.sric.org

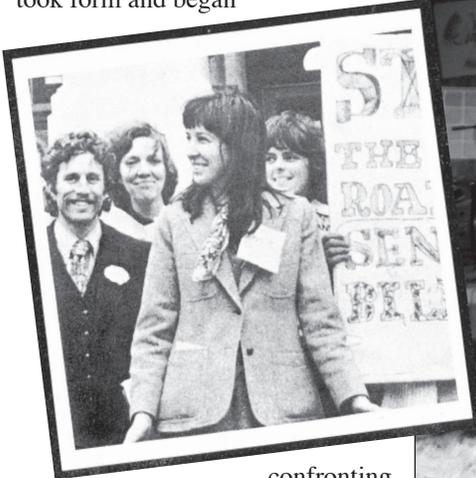
“NO NUKES Y’ALL!”

45 Years of Direct Action in the Village Square

To the village square we must take the facts of atomic energy. From there must come America’s voice.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

IN NOVEMBER 1977, maybe it was the first Thursday, Janet Lowe called a meeting. Georgians Against Nuclear Energy (GANE) took form and began



confronting

Georgia Power about its dangerous and unneeded nuclear reactors under construction at Plant Vogtle.

The group mushroomed in the aftermath of the 1979 meltdown at Three Mile Island buoyed by Helen Caldicott’s breakthrough book **Nuclear Madness**. Later that year, the all-volunteer grassroots group organized three busloads to the massive No Nukes Rally in Washington, D.C. GANE members committed civil disobedience in opposition to the Barnwell reprocessing center in South Carolina. The effort succeeded and to this day the United States does not reprocess spent nuclear fuel.

GANE was rocked to its core in May 1981 when Janet Lowe died in a tragic accident. The spunky, creative, savvy bunch of visionaries reached deep, took heart and kept leaning into its mission.

Hosting dance parties to raise funds, GANE held monthly meetings, produced info sheets and newsletters, produced educational programs and author lectures, wrote letters, organized public witnesses at hearings, conducted legal interventions, sponsored marches and rallies and kept on keeping on. In 2005, GANE changed its name to Nuclear Watch South.



FAR LEFT: GANE’s founder Janet Lowe leads a cohort at the 1981 Georgia State legislature. Longtime GANE leader Danny Feig-Sandoval is on the left.

CENTER: “ROCK AND ROLL CAN SAVE THE WORLD!” Sing loud praises for GANE’s unsung heroes, our beloved “house band” The EX-P.A.N.D. Band! P.A.N.D. stands for Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament and “EX” acknowledges the changeable personnel as well as punning the consciousness-expansion for which the group stands. The EX-P.A.N.D. Band plays benefit concerts for many groups strengthening our spirits with their fabulous repertoire and solid dance groove. Pictured here at the Lake Claire Community Land Trust for the 2014 No Nukes Y’all JAMBoree, the players are (l-r): Craig Rafuse, Bob Visentin, Gayle Thompson, Doug Landsberg, and Nuclear Watch South board member Bill Fleming.

BELOW: Longtime GANE/Nuclear Watch South leader Carol Stangler testifies against Vogtle 1 & 2 in 1985 at the Georgia Public Service Commission. This AP photo of her appeared in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Macon Telegraph and Savannah Morning News.



Nuclear Watch South’s humble credo has been one of inclusion, fairness and collaboration. Nuclear Watch South exemplifies staying power, keeping watch between crises, holding hope, while studying the destructive wickedness of toxic human technological capitalism, the deadly destruction and exploitation of atoms for the short-sighted goals of power and money.

A cursory glance at our progress: at the peak of the Cold War, 70,000 nuclear weapons held the world hostage. In 2022, there are fewer than 13,000. The U.S. has not tested a nuclear weapon in 30 years. Although we spend \$84,000 per minute on nuclear weapons, the infrastructure to build them crumbled 30 years ago and has not been replaced. **The U.N. has outlawed nuclear weapons!**

Thousands of nuclear reactors were envisioned at the dawn of the so-called peaceful atom. The number of nuclear reactors built globally topped at 440. Nuclear reactors are retiring faster than new ones are being built. With this history, the

lie of the “peaceful atom” has been proven as every country obtaining nuclear weapons did it through their civilian reactor program.

Nuclear waste remains an unsolved dilemma but we have forestalled every bad permanent high-level repository to date.

Best of all, solar and wind power have defied mainstream market indicators to become the fastest growing energy sector. Solar costs fell by 70% in the last decade and this year renewable energy output surpassed nuclear energy.

Now at the ripe age of 45, Nuclear Watch South is the oldest grassroots environmental group in Georgia and one of the oldest anti-nuclear groups in the U.S. Our mission remains the same. We are thankful for the numerous individuals who have shown up for countless actions, volunteering their time, generating ideas, donating funds and sharing the mission. Much work remains but we have held the line on the nuclear industry’s worst ambitions.

We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.

— Compiled by Glenn Carroll



Photo ©2012 Claire Hamrhan

Direct Action in the Village Square

A pictorial celebration of hope, persistence, community and love to end the Atomic Age



Photo ©1996 Tim Kulik

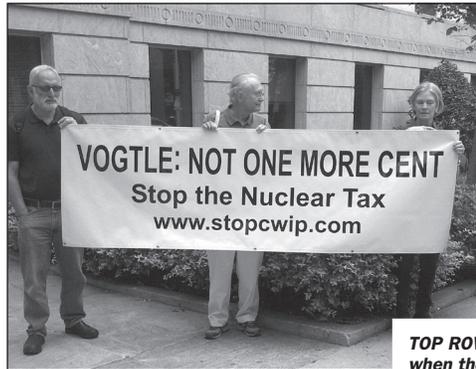
TOP: This hardy group braved 100°+ temps to carry our message to the streets following the 2012 Know Nukes Y'all Summit in Chattanooga, TN.

ABOVE: Glenn Carroll and the Georgia Tech Research Reactor on the midtown Atlanta campus in 1996. GANE brought public witnesses and made the case for permanent closure to three weeks of Federal hearings preceding the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Arguably our clearest victory, Georgia Tech decommissioned and dismantled the reactor in 1997.

LEFT: In 1990, Patti Richardson invited us to hold meetings and events at her Atomic Cafe. A goodly group assembled for a promo shot to kick off the Hard Facts Cafe educational film series. Photo: Sunny Saunders

BELOW: In 1994, guided by Bonnie Urfer and Nukewatch, GANE met a nuclear waste shipment in Decatur on the CSX rail line. In 1996, Decatur became a Nuclear Free Zone. Kay Citron got close enough for this photo and to log a radiation reading more than five times background level. Note that there is still no permanent storage for radioactive waste.





TOP ROW (l-r): RUSH HOUR AT GEORGIA POWER in 2011, when the Great Tōhoku Earthquake and Tsunami led to three weeks later Nuclear Watch South observed the anniversary headquarters during rush hour traffic; in 2012 Southern Alliance for Nuclear Plant Hatch in Baxley, Georgia; in 2018 the Georgia and Stop CWIP coalition partners declared victory. The co-Gov. Nathan Deal (l-r: Betsy Rivard for Atlanta Grandmotherhood, Tom Ferguson for Nuclear Watch South and Lindsay Harper).

CENTER ROW (l-r): In 2010 Occupy Atlanta stirred things participated in a protest at Southern Company headquarters sticker at a Stop Plant Vogtle meeting in 2010; Nuclear Watch South Public Service Commission (PSC) again in 2017 to request contractor Westinghouse declaring bankruptcy. We drew who moved us across the street (l-r: Dave Fasano, Robert Watch South carried the nuclear disarmament message to Washington distributing hand fans which urged folks to cut weapons budget to a green new deal. We were greatly energized war economy at the march. We ran into Dottie Foster from with Western States Legal Foundation from California! (l-r: Foster and her Guatemalan friends); in 2013 CNN showed Promise and we took our message to CNN headquarters in day (l-r: Tom Ferguson, Glenn Carroll, Bill Horrisberger, photo).

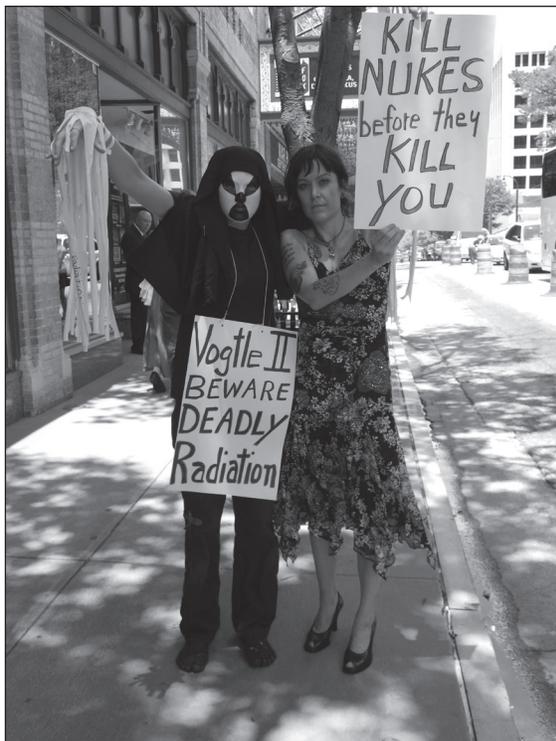
BOTTOM ROW (l-r): In 2015, a contingent of Alliance for Nuclear met with legendary Georgia Congressman John Lewis. John civil rights warrior DC Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton WAND's Becky Rafter, Lewis' legislative aide Jamila Thomas Johnson Howard, The Honorable John Lewis, Georgia WAND One/Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Coordinator Glenn Carroll. In 2012, Southern Company celebration of 100 years of consolidating its monopoly power Georgia WAND and Nuclear Watch South for a colorful and the film screening at Fox Theater where Southern Company and a movie; in 2014 the EPA held Clean Energy Hearings where Nuclear Watch South's large CARBON-FREE + NUCLEAR



Vogtle 3 & 4 construction had barely begun when multiple meltdowns at Fukushima in Japan. Two members of Three Mile Island in front of Georgia Power and the Anti-Racism Network (SARN) organized a tour of the Georgia Legislature voted to sunset the CWIP tax credit. The coalition delivered 3,000 petition signatures to the Georgia House of Representatives for Peace, Glenn Carroll, Stephanie Coffin, and the Georgia WAND, photo: Gloria Tatum)

Georgia Power and Nuclear Watch South eagerly welcomed the protesters; Ari from Occupy models nonukesyll.org. Nuclear Watch South headed down to the Georgia State Capitol for emergency public hearings in light of Vogtle 3 & 4 construction (see the attention of Capital Police, if not the PSC, and the Georgia State Police, Sue Stoudemire); in 2022 Nuclear Watch South participated in the Poor People's Campaign Moral March on Washington. Nuclear Watch South encouraged by the overall message to convert the march to the Georgia and CODE PINK and Jackie Cabasso. Participants included Joanne Sweeney, James Sweeney, Dottie Sweeney, and the pro-nuclear propaganda film Pandora's Promise. The protest in downtown Atlanta on an exceptionally windy day. Photo: Betsy Rivard, banner: Jude Lomas)

Nuclear Accountability's DC Days lobby week. Nuclear Watch South's Dan Lewis was a loyal co-sponsor of fellow protesters' Nuclear Disarmament Bill. (l-r: Georgia Power, Joanne Sweeney, Annie Laura Howard Stephens, Bernice Stephens, and board president Dianne Valentin, Proposition 1's Ellen Thomas and Nuclear Watch South. Nuclear Watch South produced a vanity book and film BIG BETS in 2017. Nuclear Watch South's power cartel. Occupy Atlanta joined Sierra Club, and the 'Billionaires for Nukes' protest during the week. Nuclear Watch South brought 1,000 of its employees for lunch around the country and for two days in Atlanta. Nuclear Watch South's CARBON-FREE + NUCLEAR-FREE banner could not be missed!



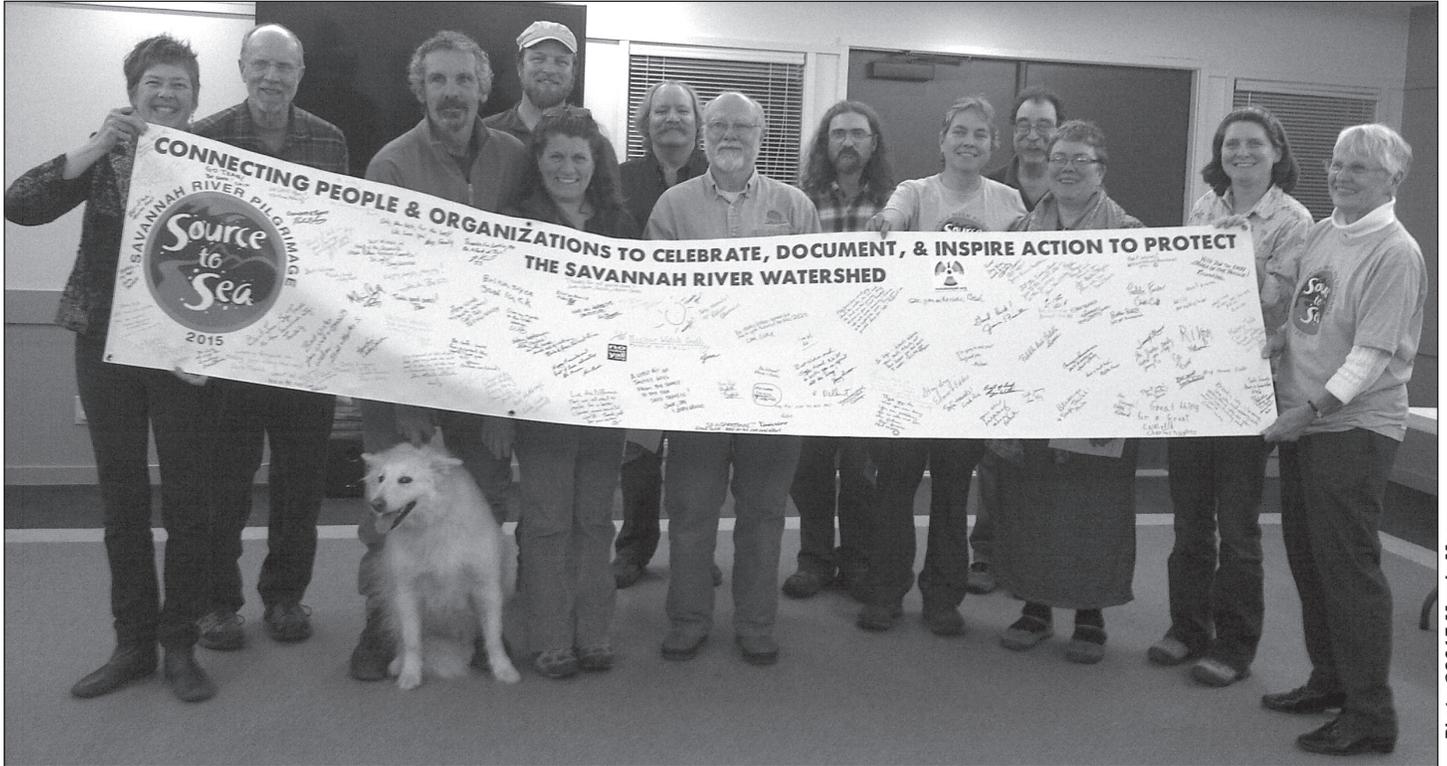
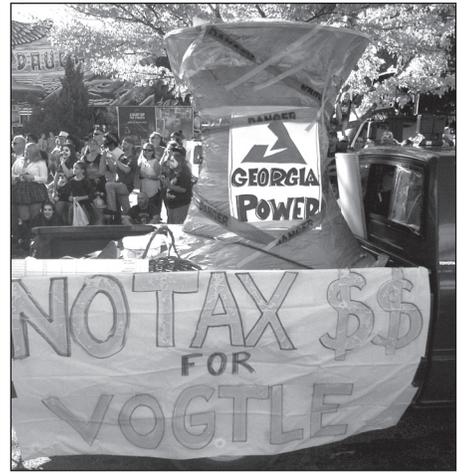
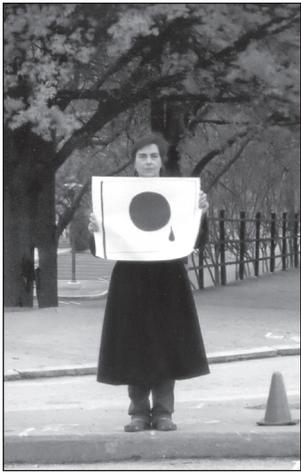


Photo ©2015 Mandy Moore



TOP (l-r): Darlene Carra created a powerful statement about Fukushima in 2011; MUSE artist Bonnie Raitt, dedicated safe energy advocate and financial supporter, gave Nuclear Watch South a shout-out and backstage pass at Atlanta's Fox Theater on her birthday in 2018; Nuclear Watch South's float in the 2015 Little Five Points Halloween Parade
CENTER: In 2015, Nuclear Watch South observed Fukushima Day at Clemson University with the Savannah River Pilgrims: Bob Brooksher, River Dog, Joanne Steele and Joanne's son Jesse. The Savannah River Pilgrimage raised awareness of the numerous nuclear threats in the Savannah River corridor on the 70th anniversary of nuclear weapons.
BOTTOM: Dr. Marci Culley and Glenn Carroll show how to fold origami paper cranes at the King Center in Atlanta on the 60th anniversary of Hiroshima in 2005; Carol Stangler and Bob Paine set up a table in Little Five Points in 1991 to generate letters in support of ending nuclear weapons testing while Brother Utsumi and Sister Denise drum and chant Na Mu Myo Ho Renge Kyo. The U.S. suspended nuclear weapons testing in 1992.

Still Building Bombs in South Carolina

by Tom Clements

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF Energy's (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS), across the river from Georgia, has long played a key role in U.S. planning for nuclear war. Recently, the ominous role has only grown, demanding citizen concern and opposition.

Beginning in the mid-1950s through the 1980s, SRS operated five nuclear reactors to produce plutonium and the tritium used in all U.S. nuclear weapons. That work, which generates massive amounts of nuclear waste, continues even today as the government-contractor alliance at SRS helps maintain U.S. capability to engage in the madness of full-scale nuclear war, under the guise of "deterrence."

DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and for-profit contractors are still pushing a 2018 proposal to produce plutonium "pits" at SRS in a proposed Plutonium Bomb Plant to be located in the abandoned plutonium fuel (MOX) building. Pits are the ~3-kg plutonium core of all U.S. nuclear weapons, producing the nuclear fission reaction that triggers a thermonuclear explosion. The proposal is part of the nefarious Biden/Trump/Obama plan to spend up to \$2 trillion on nuclear weapons in the next 30 years. This is the fifth time pit manufacturing has been proposed for SRS since 1991. It is high time, especially in light of the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to move on to more humanitarian missions.

DOE's infamous MOX project was terminated in 2018 after \$8 billion was wasted on construction (and after a 17-year legal intervention sustained by Nuclear Watch South). DOE estimates that conversion of the MOX plant into a nuclear weapons factory, initially to produce pits for two new warheads, could cost up to \$11.1 billion, but history shows that cost will rise. Given the complexity and cost of the project, creation of a large amount of new nuclear waste and lack of need for new nuclear warheads that would use the pits, it is hoped Congress will terminate this provocative project. If pursued, the total amount invested in MOX and pit plant construction alone could be \$20 billion, making this one of the most expensive buildings in U.S. history.

DOE has failed to analyze the array of environmental impacts of pit production at SRS and other sites and has brushed aside



SRS Watch Director Tom Clements stands in front of the old "K" Reactor at Savannah River Site where more than 11 metric tons of waste plutonium is stored.
Photo © 2005 Glenn Carroll

Environmental Justice concerns at both SRS and the Los Alamos National Lab, another DOE site being considered for expanded pit production. Several public interest groups, including SRS Watch, filed a federal lawsuit demanding that a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) be prepared. A court ruling is expected soon.

SRS is the sole DOE site to process and package tritium, the radioactive hydrogen gas used to boost the explosive power of nuclear weapons and used in all nuclear warheads produced by DOE. Tritium is produced via special rods produced at the Westinghouse plant in Columbia, SC, and irradiated in the Watts Bar military-commercial reactor operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

Once irradiated, the highly radioactive rods are transported to SRS, where they are processed in the Tritium Extraction Facility (TEF) and the tritium stored in small "reservoirs" to be inserted into nuclear warheads. The highly radioactive waste from this process is placed in above-ground concrete "disposal" facilities for so-called low-level nuclear waste.

Tritium has a short "half-life" of 12.3 years so demand for the radioactive gas that boosts the explosive power of a weapon is constant. DOE's goal is to replenish the tritium reservoirs in all deployed and reserve weapons, giving them maximum firepower for the anticipated nuclear war that many politicians plan, and that war profiteers such as Northrop Grumman and Lockheed, exploit to fill their overflowing bank accounts with our tax dollars.

The Westinghouse Fuel Fabrication Facility is only 10 miles south of Columbia, SC, and largely unknown to the public. Westinghouse Government Services, LLC, operates under the same roof as the commercial Westinghouse fuel fabrication facility, where uranium rods are fabricated for foreign and domestic nuclear power reactors. Westinghouse Government Services produces the specialized Tritium Producing Burnable Absorber Rods (TPBARs) that are transported to the TVA's Watts Bar Nuclear Bomb Reactor in Athens, TN, where the rods are irradiated and the lithium in them produces tritium gas. The highly radioactive rods are shipped back to SRS for processing. These "dual-use" commercial-weapons facilities operate in the shadows of the for-profit security state.

This fall, Westinghouse received a license extension from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which claims not to regulate the weapons-related TPBAR activity and/or its waste streams. The nuclear fuel factory has experienced significant accidents and environmental contamination in its history and threatens nearby Congaree River and Congaree National Park. Most recently a series of alarms to alert workers to contamination risks failed to activate. Nevertheless, the NRC is allowing the dangerous, outmoded factory to operate until 2062.

Tom Clements is the executive director of SRS Watch <https://srswatch.org>, based in Columbia, SC, and is a former Nuclear Watch South board member

BLAST RADIUS

a poem by Stephen Wing

Standing here on the curb
outside the submarine base
with my stack of
leaflets and my sign,
I feel like a hitchhiker again,
calm and relaxed,
posing like a model in an ad
for casual friendliness
and peaceable intent, swiveling
at the hip as the wheels roll by
to keep my sign angled straight
toward the passing
possibility of a glance — “The choice
today is between nonviolence
and nonexistence!” — M.L.K.,
abridged — aiming my gaze
like a peace-seeking missile
at the spot behind each tinted
windshield where I calculate
the driver’s eyes watch the red light
and wait for the green,
smiling just enough to imply
I’m having more fun out here
than you are in there, absolutely
no place I’d rather be!
— not even especially impatient
for someone to roll down
the glass barrier that divides us
to accept a leaflet and trade
pleasantries, How’re you
doing, All right, Have a great
day now! — never once letting on
how deep and forceful
the blast of joy is that erupts
from inside every time
it happens, Eureka,
hallelujah, praise the Lord,
I got a ride!



Joanne Sweeney and Stephen Wing vigil at the gates of Kings Bay Trident nuclear submarine base on a windy Easter Sunday in 2019 Photo by Sarah Cool

Purifying Uranium for The Bomb

Is BWXT-Nuclear Fuel Services getting in the bomb business?

by Linda Cataldo Modica

“MR. TRUMAN WAS JUBILANT” recounted the Catholic Worker after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima vaporized thousands of Japanese people in 1945. “We have spent two billion on the greatest scientific gamble in history and won!” jubilated President Truman.

BWXT execs and shareholders are the ones jubilating today. BWXT-Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS) has won a \$57.5 million contract from the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) “for uranium purification and conversion.” NNSA is tapping the Erwin, Tennessee, company to perform services left in the gap by Oak Ridge’s beleaguered Uranium Processing Facility (UPF) which is wildly over budget, behind schedule and relentlessly bulldogged by Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance.

In 1957, private enterprise Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS) set up shop in a narrow Tennessee mountain valley 100 miles east of Oak Ridge on the banks of the Nolichucky River to operate as a mini-Department of Energy (DOE) doing dirty, dangerous jobs that the “enterprise” can’t do at any of the national labs.

NFS is DOE’s “let’s get Mikey” work around. (You remember Mikey ... “Mikey likes it!” from the Life cereal commercial.) NFS is a decrepit 65-year-old radioactive chemical factory in a town with fewer than 6,000 people. In 1986, then-Representative, now-Senator, Ed Markey called NFS a “nuclear nightmare” when the company was not even 30 years old. Industry insiders out of earshot of BWXT call NFS the “sieve of the nuclear industry.”

For-profit NFS sits on an 80-acre plot and is the sole manufacturer of enriched-to-20% fuel for the naval reactors that propel Trident nuclear weapons submarines. The most recent bowl of enterprise money that NNSA fed to DOE’s “Mikey” was for downblending stockpiled high-enriched (weapons grade) uranium (HEU) into low-enriched fuel for the production of tritium (radioactive hydrogen for H-bombs) at TVA’s Watts Bar Nuclear Bomb Reactor.

Note: See Tom Clements’ article in this issue of *Nuclear Watch Tower* to connect more of the dots on the blurring line between commercial and nuclear weapons



Until recently, the backyards of homes with kiddie playgrounds and gardens were adjacent to NFS’s fence line. NFS has since purchased all the residences, torn them down, and added a puny “buffer zone.” Are Erwin residents safer now? Now that even more of this old railroad town has been colonized by the nuclear weapons complex?

production, a connection which is illegal under international law.

The uranium purification project at NFS will use the Ames Process which generates temperatures exceeding 1300°C and which a company spokeswoman, quoted in *The Greeneville Sun*, seemed to downplay as merely “a time-tested chemical process.” Still, because of the “potential for accidents” in “new processes, technologies, or control systems for which [it] has no prior experience,” NFS is required to seek an amendment to its NRC license. The license amendment triggers an opportunity for a public hearing before the NRC — an opportunity for civil society to get in the way (albeit indirectly) of new nuclear weapons production.

With support from Appalachian Peace Education Center, Erwin Citizen Awareness Network (ECAN) will be intervening to oppose this dangerous plan to produce nuclear weapons material at a facility so close to homes and businesses. While the NRC has “never said ‘NO’ before,” ECAN is taking this opportunity to say “NO” to The Bomb, to the NRC and to DOE’s “Mikey.” Because, as the Air Force chaplain for the Hiroshima bombardiers put it: “We must all do something for peace. This is our destiny at the most critical time in human history. But it’s also the greatest opportunity ever offered to any group of people in the history of our world — to save our world from complete annihilation.”

Linda Cataldo Modica is co-chair of Appalachian Peace Education Center and president of Erwin Citizens Awareness Network.

HIROSHIMA/KINGS BAY, SUSIE KING TAYLOR, AND THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT COME TOGETHER AUGUST 6

“Standing vigil at the gates of Kings Bay Trident nuclear submarine base is a powerful acknowledgement of the human tragedy of nuclear weapons. Honoring Susie King Taylor and the Voting Rights Act recognizes the higher character of humanity. This gives us inspiration for the work yet to be done.”

JOANNE SWEENEY, President of Nuclear Watch South

NUCLEAR WATCH SOUTH, Susie King Taylor Women’s Institute and Ecology Center and the Beyond Trident Campaign co-hosted three Coastal Georgia events August 6th, in remembrance of the August 6, 1945, nuclear destruction of Hiroshima, Japan by the United States; celebration of Susie King Taylor’s birthday in 1848; and passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965.

The day began with a prayer circle and libation ceremony at the sugar mill tabby ruins across the highway from the Kings Bay Trident nuclear submarine base in St. Marys. The sugar mill, constructed and operated by enslaved Africans, was among the deadliest of plantation industries.

The annual “Lest We Forget” vigil at the Trident base followed, and then folks trekked to the Susie King Taylor Center in Hinesville for a traditional Gullah Geechee lunch and birthday cake. The special day wrapped up at the Dorchester Center in Midway, an ideal site for the group to contemplate nonviolent confrontation and the Voting Rights Act signed on this significant date.

SUSIE KING TAYLOR WOMEN’S INSTITUTE AND ECOLOGY CENTER

Susie King Taylor escaped to freedom at age 13 and served in the U.S. Army. She gained skills in medicine and ecology. Perhaps most notable is her legacy of literacy, teaching both adults and children the life-altering skill of reading.

Hermina Glass-Hill is champion of Liberty County’s “heroine of freedom and literacy.” She is director of the Susie King Taylor Women’s Institute and Ecology Center and networks widely on multiple issues. Hermina says, “In her work in both the North and here in the South, Susie King Taylor was an early unsung social justice and peace activist whose legacy of racial and economic equality joined the universal call for civil rights.”

VOTING RIGHTS ACT 1965 - DORCHESTER CENTER

The Dorchester Center has a rich history as a private school for Black students. Later the site served as a significant Civil Rights mobilization center hosting Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Hosea Williams, Andrew Young, Dorothy Cotton, Septima Clark among many others as they created and deployed effective campaigns for Black rights. On this anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, the visitors learned about the Citizen Education Project which taught basic reading and math skills to empower new Black voters to face literacy tests and the responsibilities of voting.

BEYOND TRIDENT CAMPAIGN

The coalition of groups is inspired by the 2018 Kings Bay Plowshares action at the Trident nuclear base on the 50th anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s murder. The seven plowshares activists performed nonviolent resistance to the triplets of evil described by Dr. King: racism, militarism, and extreme materialism. Teresa Grady, sister of one of the Kings Bay Plowshares activists, felt called to stay in Georgia following the lengthy trial. She co-founded the Beyond Trident Campaign to ramp up work to overcome the “evil triplets.”

Teresa says, “Our society’s enslavement to the United States’ nuclear weapons apparatus costs \$84,000 per minute. This deadly trap squanders the dreams and resources of our society while the slave masters Raytheon, Lockheed, Boeing, et al. continue to extract profits from our societal collective resource.”

Robert Randall is co-founder of the Beyond Trident Campaign. Robert says, “Keenly aware of the racism and white supremacy upon which slavery was based, civil rights leaders of the 1940s recognized the racism and dehumanization behind the decision to use the first nuclear bombs



Susie King Taylor Institute director Hermina Glass-Hill vigils on Hiroshima Day at the entrance to Kings Bay Trident nuclear submarine base in St. Marys, GA

Co-founders of Beyond Trident Teresa Grady and Sarah Cool keep cool with the message of August 6

Robert Randall is a lifelong War Tax Resister and has resisted Trident since it was first proposed in 1979



on people of color — in New Mexico and in Japan. Today’s nuclear weapons dehumanize everyone and everything on Earth. The stubborn pursuit of nuclear weapons declares: ‘NO LIVES MATTER.’”

In 2021 the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons became international law. Georgia activists are determined to spread awareness of the apocalyptic threat of U.S. nuclear weapons and the economic and social cost of these abominable weapons of mass destruction. We seek to reclaim the U.S. Treasury from nuclear weapons merchants to fund homes, food, healthcare, education, and social justice for all.

The Kings Bay Plowshares 7 action renewed attention on the too-often overlooked nuclear threat on the Georgia Coast. The Kings Bay nuclear submarine base in St. Marys deploys 25% of the U.S. nuclear arsenal in the deadliest nuclear machines on Earth, machines possessed only by the United States and United Kingdom. One Trident submarine has sufficient firepower to annihilate 1,536 cities.

The confluence of history around the date of August 6 invites confrontation of the racism, militarism and capitalism which bind Georgia and U.S. society in a prison of social injustice. — Glenn Carroll

GODZILLA ACTION CARD
included in this newsletter
SEND YOURS IN TODAY!!!

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SUSTAINABILITY FAIR

AUGUST 18, 19 + 20, 2023

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Your Attention to the Georgia Public Service Commission Urgently Requested

CHANGES ARE afoot at the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) and if you are reading this, you are more tuned in than the majority of Georgians.

The PSC is comprised of five members serving six year terms. The PSC regulates electricity, gas and telephone providers for the state of Georgia and is supposed to represent the public's interest against the powerful monopolies they regulate. Sadly, this powerful body of elected officials enrich the for-profit companies they

supposedly regulate while being obscure to many voters whose rates for necessary public services are being set by them.

This election year, two seats are up for grabs. Two-term Commissioner Tim Echols is being challenged by former Georgia Sierra Club Director Patty Durand, and Fitz Johnson, appointed to replace resigned Commissioner Chuck Eaton, is being challenged by Shelia Edwards for the remainder of the term.

WAKE UP, GUY\$!



Georgia's New Nuke\$ Co\$t ~\$21 Billion!!!

Former PSC Commissioners Doug Everett and Stan Wise are caught napping during December 2015 public hearings on the Vogtle debacle. Both commissioners resigned two years later after voting with Georgia Power for Vogtle construction to continue in the wake of lead contractor Westinghouse's bankruptcy declaration and South Carolina utilities' abandonment of the only other reactors under construction in the U.S., the two Westinghouse AP1000 reactors at V.C. Summer near Columbia. The unanimous PSC decision in 2017 extended the timeframe to complete Vogtle by five years and doubled the certified cost of Vogtle 3&4 construction to \$27 billion. As he was leaving office, Stan Wise famously declared, when asked if he thought Vogtle would be completed within the new timeframe and budget, "I WOULDN'T BET MY HOUSE ON IT." Current Commissioners Jason Shaw and Tricia Pridemore were appointed to fill the positions left empty by the resignations.

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appealing to you to make the PSC races a high priority and make sure your friends and family in the affected districts come out to vote in the Special Election!

It is worth noting that Patty Durand has also brought a lawsuit concerning Echols' and Pridemore's collusion to redistrict the PSC in an attempt to disqualify her from the race. Echols also asked to include Tybee Island in his district so he could move there.

— Glenn Carroll

Dear Friends,

We hope you find this issue of Nuclear Watch Tower informative and inspiring. Nuclear Watch South has enjoyed many great adventures in pursuit of its mission: to phase out nuclear power and promote conservation and sustainable energy sources such as wind and solar; to halt the proliferation of nuclear materials and abolish the global threat of nuclear weapons; and to promote the formation of ethical environmental policies for nuclear waste handling and containment.

Our movement has been relentless in its pursuit of a nuclear-free future and effective in helping to contain the nuclear threat. Nuclear reactors and nuclear weapons are indeed being taken off-line and uranium mines are closing, but nuclear contractors shamelessly dig their hands deeper and deeper into the peoples' public treasury with false promises of "clean" energy, jobs and world peace, and sadly, our leaders keep falling for it.

Please send the enclosed postcard TODAY encouraging our elected officials to convert the \$44 billion nuclear weapons budget to address climate catastrophe with a Green New Deal. And please **give generously to Nuclear Watch South** to help us keep the pressure on. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world!" **THANK YOU!!!**

**no
nukes
yall
.org**

Donations to NUCLEAR WATCH SOUTH are fully tax-deductible and totally appreciated!
Use the enclosed envelope and mail to P.O. Box 8574, Atlanta, GA 31106 or donate on-line at

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